United Nations A/55/188

General Assembly

Distr.: General
28 July 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 96 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Sustainable development and international economic cooperation: Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy

Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy

Report of the Secretary-General**

* A/55/150.

** The present report was submitted after 30 June 2000 owing to the fact that this Division was awaiting responses from organizations within the United Nations system.

00-58464 (E) 280800

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–2	3
II.	Activities of the organizations of the United Nations system	3	3
	A. United Nations Secretariat	3–10	3
	B. Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)	11–18	4
	C. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)	19–28	6
	D. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	29–35	7
	E. United Nations Development Programme	36–51	8
	F. United Nations Environment Programme	52–60	9
	G. United Nations International Drug Control Programme	61–64	10
	H. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	65–76	11
	I. United Nations Population Fund	77–80	12
	J. International Labour Organization	81–86	13
	K. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	87–97	14
	L. World Bank	98–103	15
	M. International Monetary Fund	104–105	16
	N. Universal Postal Union	106	16
	O. United Nations Industrial Development Organization	107–109	17
	P. International Telecommunication Union	110–111	17
	Q. World Intellectual Property Organization	112	17
	R. World Meteorological Organization	113–114	17
	S. World Trade Organization	115–116	18

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 51/175, the General Assembly called upon the organizations of the United Nations system to continue to conduct analytical activities and to provide policy advice and technical cooperation to the economies in transition on the social and political framework for economic and market reforms, in particular in regard to the development of the necessary conditions for attracting foreign investments. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to the General Assembly every two years. The present report has been prepared in response to that request and is based on information supplied to the Secretary-General as of 15 July 2000.

2. With regard to analytical activities, most of the organizations of the United Nations system prepare an annual report which provides an overview of their activities and issues within the organization's area of competence. Such reports encompass work relating to and assistance to the economies in transition which forms an integral part of the analysis and policy advice of the organizations of the United Nations system to the economies in transition. Being universal in nature, those annual reports are not reviewed here.

II. Activities of the organizations of the United Nations system

A. United Nations Secretariat

3. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs continued to conduct analytical activities and to provide policy advice and technical assistance to the economies in transition in each of its main programme areas.

4. In the area of population, a number of analytical and policy activities were carried out relating to economies in transition since the previous report on this subject (see A/53/336). The volume *National Population Policies: Addendum* presented essential data on population policies for 10 countries with economies in transition. The report *Charting the Progress of Populations*, prepared for the Commission on Social Development and the Commission on Population and Development, showed the position of countries with economies in transition with regard to meeting the goals of the global conferences in the social and economic area. The report entitled *Levels and Trends of Contraceptive Use as Assessed in 1998*, and the accompanying wall chart, provided information on contraceptive use; the wall chart *World Marriage Patterns 1999* showed the most recent data on marriage patterns; and *World Urbanization Prospects: The 1999 Revision* provided an updated set of estimates and projections of the populations of urban and rural areas and large cities of the economies in transition.

5. In the area of statistics, in November 1999 the Department conducted a training workshop on international trade statistics for countries of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States to introduce the revised United Nations concepts and definitions. The Department, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), continued to implement a regional project in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan to strengthen population and housing census-taking capabilities. Regional and national technical workshops were organized in the areas of census management, data processing, and dissemination of census results. Advisory services were provided to the countries, upon request, to support census operations, questionnaire design, data processing, editing and tabulations. The Department also provided technical assistance to the National Institute for Statistics and Forecasting of Turkmenistan in preparation of their "mini census". A seminar on the dissemination and marketing of official statistics was organized for all the countries in transition.

6. In the area of public administration, the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration provided the following policy and technical advice for economies in transition: public administration reform, strengthening of civil society by building capacities, election administration, economic crisis and conflict prevention system for Romania, support to the National Assembly of Armenia in accountability, evaluation of the International Business School in Lithuania, and democratization, human rights and governance in Uzbekistan. Elected representatives and appointed officials from more than 20 countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth participated in a conference entitled "Decentralization: Conditions for Success", to exchange views on the progress in their respective countries. A regional centre was established in Thessaloniki, Greece, for Eastern Europe and

Commonwealth countries to improve professionalism, ethical values and standards in the public sector. The Division also produced publications on transition issues such as financial management, restructuring, privatization of public-sector activities, and development of entrepreneurship and small businesses.

7. In 1999 the Division for Social Policy and Development organized a series of meetings on socio-economic policy in countries with economies in transition to exchange views and experiences in the field of social policies, to draw attention to the recommendations of the World Summit for Social Development and to assist countries with their preparation for the meeting in Geneva to review the outcome of the Summit five years later. An ad hoc expert group meeting was organized in New York on social expenditure and resource mobilization policies for social development in countries with economies in transition, and a regional symposium on socio-economic policies during macroeconomic stabilization in countries with economies in transition was organized in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The International Seminar on Policies for Reducing Social Costs of the Transition Process was organized in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, and the Workshop on Social Policies in Southeastern Europe was organized in Vienna, Austria. In addition, the Division has been backstopping projects in the field of socio-economic policy in Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Ukraine and Turkmenistan.

8. The Division for the Advancement of Women has been acting as a focal point and assisting the countries in transition to meet the reporting obligations to the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The Division provided training and advisory services, for instance to Kyrgyzstan, in preparation and writing of their Committee reports. On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a judicial colloquium on the application of international human rights law at the domestic level was organized by the Division in Vienna.

9. In the area of sustainable development, a number of national activities were supported. In Uzbekistan, a pilot project was formulated for strengthening capabilities for disaster preparedness and prevention, and an evaluation was undertaken of environmental programmes for the Aral Sea region. In Georgia, a project is supporting the Government's strategy for the development of land markets and implementation of land taxation by improving the managerial and administrative capacity of the Department of Land Management and assisting the establishment of cadastre, land registration and land taxation systems. In Croatia, assistance is being provided in the preparation of the country's human development report. At the regional level, an expert meeting was held in Bratislava to consider national strategies for cleaner production, based on the integration of policies and programmes for industrial development and environmental protection.

10. The Development Policy Analysis Division carried out comprehensive reviews of economic and social developments in transition economies in its annual *World Economic and Social Survey* and the end-of-year *World Economic Situation and Prospects* and produced regular macroeconomic forecasts and analyses within the framework of the LINK system. Some of the major developments covered were the impact of the financial crisis, economic recession and the subsequent recovery in the Russian Federation on the other countries in transition, especially those in the Baltic and Commonwealth regions, issues related to the accession of certain transition countries to the European Union and their prospective integration into the European Monetary Union, the crisis in Kosovo, and assistance by the international community to Balkan countries. The Division continued to analyse the macroeconomic situation and transformation processes in individual countries as part of its monitoring duties. In addition, specific topics of relevance to the transition economies, such as inflation targeting and the new economy, were discussed within the framework of the LINK network with the participation of the representatives from countries in transition.

B. Economic Commission for Europe

11. Activities of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) to assist the economies in transition in their integration into the world economy focused on analyses of economic development in those countries and on promoting their ability to implement the norms and standards developed under the aegis of ECE. Many

of the activities are subregional in character and are implemented in close cooperation with subregional groupings and initiatives, such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Central European Initiative (CEI) and Commonwealth of Independent States, the South-east European Cooperative Initiative (SECI), and the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA).

1. Analytical work

12. Each *Economic Survey of Europe* has provided comprehensive analytical reviews of economic developments and problems of the transitional economies of Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States, including detailed sections on international trade and foreign capital flows. In addition, the Surveys carried special studies on the implications of international financial instability and of the Russian crisis for transitional economies on the post-war reconstruction and economic regeneration in south-eastern Europe and on economic convergence in Europe, with particular emphasis on the first 10 years of transition.

13. Every spring, beginning in 1998, ECE has held a seminar immediately before its annual session and has also devoted the first day of its session to a structured discussion of a specific economic topic. So far, both meetings have been devoted largely to issues concerning the transition process. The theme of the 2000 seminar was "From plan to market; the transition process after 10 years".

2. Assistance in the implementation of ECE norms and standards

14. Assistance in the implementation of ECE conventions, protocols, norms and standards is generally carried out through the provision of regional advisory services and training workshops and through the development of policy guidelines and recommendations in different areas. Technical meetings have been held in different areas to facilitate access by countries in transition to networks of experts and policy makers. An informal meeting of national accounts experts from the Commonwealth countries was organized in May 2000 to discuss issues of specific concern to them.

3. Trade and investment promotion

15. In the area of trade, ECE has developed norms, standards and recommendations through its Centre for the Facilitation of Procedures and Practices in Administration, Commerce and Transport (CEFACT) and helped countries in transition to set up local trade facilitation committees which bring together private- and public-sector parties responsible for international trade. ECE contributes to reducing non-tariff barriers within the region by encouraging mutual recognition of standards and certification, by assisting to bring their certification practices in line with world standards and by developing guidelines for the incorporation of international standards into national trade regulations.

16. In the area of investment, ECE has undertaken activities aimed to develop the capacity of transition economies to attract private-sector investment in infrastructure; to improve the investment environment for activities that depend upon intellectual property rights; to develop well-functioning institutions and laws in support of real estate markets; to encourage the use of international commercial arbitration and to promote the transfer of best practice in the region to support industrial restructuring and enterprise development. ECE also periodically holds events and publishes guidelines on related topics such as competition policy, investment promotion and trade financing.

4. Environment and sustainable energy

17. The ECE environmental performance review programme produces assessments of and policy recommendations for individual ECE member countries with economies in transition. The reports on Croatia and Ukraine were finalized and published in 1999. Reviews of Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are in progress, as are follow-ups to the reviews of Slovenia, Moldova and Bulgaria.

18. The Energy Efficiency 2000 Project and the Energy Efficiency Investment Project for Climate Change Mitigation are assisting Eastern European and Commonwealth countries to enhance their energy efficiency and meet international environmental treaty obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The ECE Gas Centre's programme of work also promotes the implementation of market-based policies and practices in economies in transition.

C. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

19. Activities of the ESCAP secretariat for the economies in transition focused on the following areas: policy analysis and advice; promoting regional/subregional cooperation, especially in the area of international trade and foreign investment; solving social issues; improving environment and natural resources management; and strengthening collaboration with other organizations.

1. Policy analysis and advice

20. The *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* of 1999 and 2000 were the main analytical outlets for reviewing and assessing economic and social developments and issues in the economies in transition in the ESCAP region. The Surveys looked closely at the impact of the crises in Asia and in the Russian Federation on the economies in transition and considered the prospects for resumed growth in the region. Other mandated recurrent publications dealing with transitional countries include *How to Do Business in Kyrgyzstan, How to Do Business in Uzbekistan, Trade and Investment Complementarities among the South-western Member Countries of ESCAP*, and *Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment: Lessons for Economies in Transition*. At its fifty-sixth session, ESCAP discussed bringing the economies in transition into the regional trading network under the agenda item "Development through globalization and partnership in the twenty-first century: an Asia/Pacific perspective for integrating developing countries and economies in transition into international trading system on a fair and equitable basis".

2. Promoting regional/subregional cooperation

21. ESCAP organized the seventh Asia/Pacific International Trade Fair under the theme "Lifestyle: twenty-first century" in Almaty, Kazakhstan, to promote trade, investment and economic cooperation between the economies of Central Asia and the Asian region by encouraging business contacts. Representatives from the economies of Central Asia participated in two other subregional meetings, one dealing with implementation of tax reforms and the other with the application of strategic environmental management for sustainable development in the Central Asian region. To increase the effectiveness of the participation of the economies in transition in regional and global trade, the ESCAP secretariat has started a project on advisory assistance for export promotion.

3. Solving social issues

22. Most economies in transition participated in a high-level meeting to review the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Bali Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development. They were also involved in ESCAP activities and meetings on such topics as promotion of women's participation in small businesses, elimination of sexual abuse and exploitation of youth, promotion of human rights of children and youth, skills development of social service and health personnel, and promotion of literacy among women and girls.

4. Improving the management of the environment and natural resources

23. The provision of technical assistance in this area focused on an assessment of the state of the environment and the effective use and monitoring of energy, water and mineral resources in the countries concerned. Upon request, advisory missions were undertaken in Kazakhstan, Mongolia and the Russian Federation to help improve the use of energy in industries; in Viet Nam and Mongolia to assist in the integration of water resource management and water-quality standards; and in Azerbaijan to recommend appropriate regulatory and institutional framework for foreign investment promotion in the mineral resource sector.

24. ESCAP also collaborated with the International Fund to Save the Aral Sea to provide technical assistance to the economies of Central Asia in the rational and efficient use of energy and water resources. The ESCAP secretariat issued two publications on the geology and mineral resources of Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia which proved to be useful for negotiations with donors.

5. Strengthening collaboration with other organizations

25. ESCAP continued to cooperate with ECE in the implementation of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia to promote economic

cooperation and facilitate the integration of Central Asian economies in Europe and Asia.

26. ESCAP also collaborated with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to initiate the so-called Hi-Fi Plan for selected countries in transition. The Plan is expected to enhance private sector activities through human resources development (H), institutional capacity-building (i), facilitation measures (F), and investment promotion (i). Also in cooperation with ADB, ESCAP organized an inception workshop on rebasing and linking national accounts series.

27. In collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO), ESCAP organized the first trade policy training course which was attended by officials from Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia and Viet Nam. The economies in transition seeking accession to the WTO participated in a meeting of senior officials on the future WTO trade agenda and developing countries, held by ESCAP, in cooperation with UNCTAD and ADB.

28. The economies in transition from South-East Asia participated in a project on institutions and human resource capacity-building for the new entrants into the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), implemented by ESCAP in collaboration with the ASEAN secretariat in 1998. Those countries also benefited from a symposium on comprehensive development of the countries of the greater Mekong subregion, held in Bangkok.

D. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

1. Trade-related advisory services

29. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) secretariat provides support to countries in transition in the areas of trade efficiency, customs reform and modernization, trade and transport facilitation, and cooperation. Within the framework of a regional project "Support to countries in transition in the areas of trade efficiency and economic cooperation", technical assistance missions were sent in 1998 and 1999 to Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The recommendations made in their reports have been grouped together to form elements of a programme of assistance entitled "Promotion of trade, transit and transport facilitation", which is to be implemented within the overall framework of a trade efficiency action programme for the region.

2. Capacity-building assistance

30. During the period under review, UNCTAD provided advisory services on accession to WTO to Azerbaijan, Belarus, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Viet Nam. Seminars on the generalized system of preferences (GSP) schemes of the European Union (EU), Japan and the United States of America were organized in Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Assistance on competition law and policy was provided to Commonwealth member countries and to Viet Nam.

31. Under its research-LINKS initiative, UNCTAD's reference service is gradually evolving relationships with institutions of higher learning and economic research in transition countries interested in the exchange of documentation and publications in subject areas within the purview of UNCTAD. Several institutions have indicated their interest in developing closer relationships with UNCTAD for capacity-building in research and analysis along the lines recommended by the Advisory Committee on Coordination (ACC).

32. UNCTAD is also implementing Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS) projects in Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam.

33. In the context of its ongoing programme of assistance to Albania, UNCTAD advised the Government of Albania on a programme of action to restore investor confidence after the political turmoil in the region. One of the promotional activities was the 1999 International Investment Conference in Tirana, organized by the Albanian Economic Development Agency (AEDA), in cooperation with UNCTAD and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

34. UNCTAD sponsors and implements structured training programmes for national officials, managers and trainers from transition countries. The TRAINMAR programme trains policy makers and senior managers for maritime trade and port management and helps countries establish their own training programmes. Such training centres are now operational in Romania and Georgia where there are

plans to organize a TRAINMAR workshop in the near future. Discussions are taking place to extend cooperation to the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Central Asian Republics. Through the TRAINMAR network, the UNCTAD secretariat, with World Bank funding, has provided advice and study tours to officials of the port of Durres in Albania.

35. UNCTAD's computerized customs management system has now been installed in over 80 countries, including economies in transition. A number of countries, including Estonia, commenced operational use of the latest version of the system.

E. United Nations Development Programme

1. Country level activities

36. The most recent Albanian human development report analyses the impact of migration for the development of the country and its neighbours and the extent of human potential to be utilized for the benefit of the country. UNDP provided technical assistance to the Government in the elaboration of a national strategy for small and medium enterprise support and promotion, which is now in the process of being approved by Parliament. At the local level, it provided technical and financial support for the establishment of business centres in areas that suffer from a high rate of unemployment but have good development potential.

37. In Armenia, UNDP supported the Armenian Freenet facility which established free public Internet access and the first training facility in the region for Internet users. In partnership with the United Nations Secretariat (Department for Economic and Social Affairs), UNDP provided advice on the formulation of enabling legislation and refining the structure of the supreme audit institution, in addition to offering training and material support. In partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNDP provided assistance to the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Education in organizing training and a revolving credit fund for micro-entrepreneurs.

38. UNDP assisted Azerbaijan in developing small businesses, local employment and training centres and helped the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to provide support services to vulnerable people. In particular, UNDP supported the farmers and entrepreneurs of the Nakhchivan region.

39. In close cooperation with UNCTAD, UNDP supported the efforts of the Government of Belarus to accede to WTO. UNDP also helped in establishing business incubators, aimed at supporting local entrepreneurs.

40. With technical assistance from the Department for Economic and Social Affairs, UNDP has since 1995 provided policy advisory support to the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the area of economic management and transition to a market economy. A local think tank consisting of eminent economists from both entities and neighbouring countries was established to conduct research on issues of transition. Findings and recommendations were presented through a series of international/national workshops.

41. UNDP supported the reorganization of the Department for Land Management in Georgia, with the aim of establishing electronic land registration and taxation systems and a properly functioning land market. UNDP is supporting the Ministry of Finance in monitoring and managing Georgia's external debt and in creating a favourable investment environment by building the capacity of the Georgian Investment Centre. UNDP is supporting the recovery of Georgia's manganese subsector by introducing modern, quality management approaches and procedures in the electro-chemical processing of manganese.

42. UNDP supported the Government of Kazakhstan in the preparation of its strategy for accession to WTO and also assisted in the development of a transit transport framework agreement for Central Asia, one of the major economic challenges for that biggest landlocked country in the world.

43. UNDP supported the Government of Kyrgyzstan with policy advice on privatization and financial management. It assisted entrepreneurs in setting up small businesses through a network of integrated business centres which offer consulting and training services as well as credit.

44. With the assistance of the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNDP and the World Bank, the main focus of UNDP activities in Lithuania remained the creation of a modern social security system, including the introduction of a private pension scheme. A social budgeting system was introduced, and the monitoring and evaluation capacities of social security and assistance programmes were strengthened. An external and internal debt management system is under

implementation with technical support from UNCTAD. With assistance from UNDP, Lithuania prepared its first national poverty reduction strategy for presentation at the special session of the General Assembly to review the progress made since the Social Summit.

45. UNDP has been actively supporting the Government of Moldova, in particular the Ministry of Economy and Reforms, in building its capacity to coordinate the flow of assistance and to mobilize financial resources. With the support of UNDP, a trade development and export promotion strategy was developed, and the Social and Economic Information Centre and the National Agency for Foreign Investment were established.

46. The Early Warning System and Conflict Prevention project began this year in Romania and will be complemented by assistance in the area of crisis management, mainly through systematic analysis and training of a pool of qualified mediators capable of servicing the Government and civil society. Romania became a pilot country for the "Partners in action" programme, aimed at encouraging a partnership approach between the United Nations system and the business community. A UNDP project, "Strengthening Romania's export capacities", assists the Government in preparing a promotional scheme for small and medium-sized enterprises to promote exports. Another project will allow the Ministry of Finance to build up a comprehensive database concerning grants provided to Romania.

47. In cooperation with UNCTAD, UNDP is working toward strengthening the capacity of the Government of the Russian Federation in its accession to WTO by providing training and advisory services and assistance to improve the analytical and research capacities of governmental institutions.

48. In the Slovak Republic, UNDP is cooperating with the Government on developing a sustainable approach to regional development, based on partnerships between the Government, the private sector and civil society. UNDP's support is aimed at building an institutional foundation for local and regional development in one pilot region, which would be used as a model for other regions of the country.

49. National capacity to launch cost-effective, demand-driven and individually tailored vocational training programmes was created in Ukraine. The modular training methodology developed by the ILO has been introduced in more than 100 training institutions in the country to facilitate area-based development and income-generation.

50. As a result of UNDP programme interventions, a small business incubator system and micro-credit schemes have been established throughout Uzbekistan. It was reported that over 200 businesses were formed with business incubator assistance. UNDP also helped introduce micro-credit operations in several areas of the country.

2. Regional programme

51. A capacity-building project for the governmental offices of the States of South-eastern Europe, based in the regional support centre in Bratislava, aims to enhance the capacity of those States for strategic thinking on conflict prevention and crisis management through the provision of analytical tools for assessing social, political and economic causes of tension. Specific interventions include, inter alia, a regional early warning system, strategic capacity-building of governmental institutions, and capacity-building for conflict analysis and conflict prevention. It is hoped that the broad outcome of these interventions will result in the stabilization of the conflict-sensitive economic environment of the region.

F. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

52. Assistance from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to countries in transition focuses on promoting regional and subregional cooperation in the field of environment and on creating environmental awareness and increasing the financial support to environmental protection through UNEP and otherwise. UNEP capacity-building assistance focuses on biodiversity, water, environmental law and institution-building, climate and ozone protection, environmental assessment and chemicals management.

53. In the field of biodiversity, assistance is provided within the context of the Pan-European Biodiversity and Landscape Strategy (PEBLDS), a regional effort jointly administered by UNEP and the Council of Europe. Regional meetings to facilitate the implementation of biodiversity conventions were organized in 1998 and 1999 in Kazakhstan. A

biodiversity service project, to assist in the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, was approved in 1998 by a consortium of organizations, and a trust fund was established. A delivery test of the service was held on 29 June 1999 by the biodiversity consortium of organizations, with the Government of Uzbekistan.

54. In the area of water, technical assistance focused on the development of a convention for the Caspian Sea and on institution-building within the framework of the Caspian Environment Programme. UNEP also participates, with UNDP and the World Bank, in coordinating activities within the next phase of the Black Sea Environment Programme. Recent developments include initial work for a nutrients protocol to the Bucharest Black Sea Convention. UNEP also commissioned a feasibility study for the integrated management of the Carpathian River basins.

55. UNEP is assisting with the initial development of an environmental law programme in Central Asian countries, jointly with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Countries in transition receive technical assistance in their implementation of global environmental conventions through activities such as Convention Watch, a project aimed at providing parliamentarians with easier access to environmental law information.

56. The capacities of countries in transition to assess the state of their environment and build their information capabilities are reinforced by the Environment and Natural Resource Information Network (ENRIN) which is now operational in most of those countries. Assistance is also provided to a number of countries for the preparation of their environment performance reports. The UNEP national committees network was expanded in 1998-1999 with seven new UNEP national committees, and a proposal for the establishment of a Baltic trust fund was developed.

57. Within the framework of international legal instruments addressing environmental issues, countries in transition have been assisted through a project "Developing a harmonized approach to environmental legislation in CIS countries", implemented by the Centre for International Projects of the State Committee of the Russian Federation for Environmental Protection, in cooperation with the Institute of State and Law of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

58. UNEP facilitated cleaner production and environmentally sound management through the establishment of regional training centres. A regional workshop on the principles for urban management in Eastern Europe was organized in 1999. A study on the prospects, opportunities and implementation strategy of a regional clean development mechanism for Central Asia was completed in May 1999. Under the UNEP Global Environment Forum/Ozone Action, assistance was provided to a number of countries in transition in the implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

59. UNEP participated in the preparation of environmental performance reviews for Ukraine, Croatia, Armenia and Kyrgystan. Through ENRIN, assistance is regularly provided to transitional countries in the preparation of state of the environment reports. Emergency assistance was provided in 1999 to assess the Siberian forest fires and the state of the environment in the Balkans. That latter activity resulted in a widely distributed report "The Kosovo conflict: consequences for the environment and human settlements".

60. Transitional countries are also assisted through chemicals management workshops and a project to strengthen national chemicals management in the Commonwealth, implemented by the Centre for International Projects (CIP) in Moscow.

G. United Nations International Drug Control Programme

61. Drug-related crime and drug abuse pose a serious threat to countries in transition. In a number of areas, drug trafficking has been used by ultra-nationalistic and terrorist groups to finance their anti-government activities — South-eastern Europe, the northern Caucasus and Central Asia being the most prominent examples. Common trends in transitional countries are lowering of the age of initiation to drug use, an increase in the number of injecting addicts, and the related explosion of HIV/AIDS.

62. Activities of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in countries in transition are undertaken within the framework of two subregional Memoranda of Understanding on cooperation in drug control. One, signed in 1995,

includes the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia; the other was signed by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in 1996 and was amended by the Protocol on Accession of the Government of the Russian Federation and the Aga Khan Development Network in 1998. During 1998-2000, UNDCP designed and launched several technical cooperation programmes aimed at strengthening state institutions involved in drug control. In Central and Eastern Europe, close to the $US 4.5 million in assistance were delivered through advisory services by international experts, international training and provision of special equipment. A major ongoing undertaking is the joint UNDCP Poland and Hungary Action for Restructuring of the Economy (PHARE) programme for strengthening drug law enforcement capacities in South-eastern Europe, implemented in partnership with the European Commission. Other projects include training of health professionals in modern methods of drug abuse treatment, modernization of methodology for the training of drug-scenting dogs, improvement of border controls, and development of advanced capacities for police investigation.

63. The Central Asian region, consisting of almost impenetrable mountains in the east and vast, sparsely populated deserts in the west and north, presents a formidable challenge. An overall assessment of the drug problem is being made by UNDCP and a coordinated web of UNDCP personnel. With a budget of over $45 million (1997-2001), it is carrying out activities designed to deal with the production of illicit drugs and drug trafficking in and through the region. A large portion of UNDCP's work is focused on assisting Governments to update or introduce relevant laws. Communication and information exchange between the countries are seen as critical, and numerous workshops, study tours and personnel exchanges have been organized. Border controls are an important factor in the success of the programme, and four projects focus specifically on this area.

64. In view of the preponderance of HIV infection among injecting drug users in the region, UNDCP, together with UNAIDS, UNFPA, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and UNDP, has prepared projects in each of the five countries of Central Asia dealing with HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted disease, and drug abuse.

H. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

1. Analytical work

65. The annual publication of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *The State of Food and Agriculture*, continued reviewing developments in the agricultural sector and agricultural policies in the transitional countries. The results of a research project on the role of agriculture in transition, undertaken in 1996-1998, are to be published as a book, including case studies on Bulgaria, Poland and the Slovak Republic.

66. FAO assisted in the organization of one-day workshops to assess follow-up activities to the World Food Summit and to update the Strategies for National Agricultural Development: Horizon 2010 in Albania, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania and Slovak Republic in early 2000. Four more workshops are scheduled for later in the year.

67. The European System of Cooperative Research Networks in Agriculture (ESCORENA), comprising 13 networks, promotes cooperation between Western and Eastern European countries. Researchers from Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth countries participated in over 30 workshops and conferences organized through the System. This European-wide institutional support made possible the regular publication of seven newsletters in three languages and numerous other technical reports.

68. Two workshops to develop joint plans of action for the management of animal genetic resources in the European region were organized — one for the Baltic States, in Lithuania in June 1998; and another for the South-eastern European countries, in Greece in June 1999.

2. National agricultural and sectoral policy development

69. Assistance is being provided to a number of countries in the region in forestry-sector development and the identification of priorities for investment, in developing appropriate policy, legal and institutional instruments to support private forestry. Assistance is also being provided in establishing national forestry action plans and in developing national strategies for modern forest-fire prevention and control.

70. A regional workshop entitled "Land ownership, land markets and their influence on the efficiency of agricultural production in Central and Eastern Europe" was organized by the FAO regional office for Europe, in Halle, Germany, to explore and analyse related institutions, policy instruments and experience.

71. Several member nations in the region are being assisted to improve land registration and cadastre systems. Through the formulation of investment projects for World Bank funding, assistance is provided to Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in setting up or improving land cadastre systems. FAO, in close cooperation with the International Land Tenure School in Cervia, Italy, organized three seminars to assist national and local authorities in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth and the Black Sea region in formulating policies for land-tenure administration.

72. FAO is also implementing a joint FAO/World Food Programme (WFP) project, "Support for a food security surveillance capacity in the Kosovo province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia", funded by USAID for a duration of one year. Projects assisting in the formulation of agriculture-sector strategies were carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria. A specific food security assessment is being undertaken in the Russian Federation.

73. The FAO regional office for Europe is promoting the integration of rural women's issues into the national policies of transitional countries through various workshops, seminars, and gender-disaggregated data collection.

3. Nutrition, food quality and safety promotion

74. A range of technical assistance projects continues to be implemented by FAO in the areas of nutrition and food quality and safety. Several projects aim at helping national food control systems to meet the international requirements of the WTO agreements, including training trainers on the implementation of quality assurance systems such as the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) to protect consumers from poor quality food products.

75. FAO has supported harmonization of national food legislation, standards and control procedures with EU and requirements of the Codex Alimentarius in the case of those transitional countries involved in pre-accession negotiations to EU membership. Regional workshops and projects have been set up to support national Codex committees and Codex contact points.

76. FAO food and nutrition monitoring systems, as part of the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS), mandated by the World Food Summit, are being strengthened, particularly in regions affected by war, such as Balkans. Country nutrition profiles have been prepared in some countries in transition to monitor progress in the achievement of food security and nutritional well-being. Educational materials on nutrition have been provided by FAO in several national languages of the region for use in public schools and at home. FAO is supporting training and the development of food composition data to strengthen the capacity of countries to assess food quality and nutritive values of food products.

I. United Nations Population Fund

77. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has used a two-pronged approach to the difficulties of the economies in transition — the first aimed at responding to urgent needs in the area of reproductive health, the second focused on long-term capacity-building. UNFPA extended technical support in health policy formulation, and in service support to expand choices by improving quality and access to reproductive health services. As part of the United Nations system, UNFPA provided humanitarian support, along with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization, in Kosovo, North Caucasus and Azerbaijan by providing maternal and reproductive health care to refugees and displaced persons and psychological support to victims of gender-based violence.

78. On a longer-term basis, UNFPA helped to build national capacity and self-reliance in undertaking population and reproductive health programmes, including project formulation and programme management. In a number of countries, such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania and Turkmenistan, UNFPA assisted in furthering the social reform process by contributing to health reform. Special emphasis was placed on securing equitable access to reproductive health care for poor and under-served population groups, including minorities and adolescents. In view of policies that increasingly

decentralize health care financing, greater attention is being paid to building up local capacities in order to place reproductive health on a sustainable trajectory. Among other things, the initiatives involve instituting changes in pre-service curricula of various categories of health professionals to include training in reproductive health (Albania, Georgia, Armenia, Tajikistan) and building skills for peer counselling in order to address the special needs of adolescents (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russian Federation, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania). A pilot project with the social patronage system in Kyrgyzstan is yielding promising results for making the health care services prevention-oriented and community-based.

79. UNFPA supported research designed to generate the social indicators that matched the economic indicators collected by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). It also launched a series of regional cooperative programmes in population analysis for policy development, focusing on selected aspects of population change and its interrelationships with social and economic trends. It worked with national population institutes and national statistical offices in those fields in transitional countries, through subcontracts and joint studies. 1999 marked the end of a four-year programme of data collection, research, training and technical assistance in the fields of fertility, population ageing, and international migration.

80. UNFPA supported census capacity-building through projects for which ECE and the Statistics Division of the United Nations Secretariat were executing agencies. Two major regional training programmes took place: a seminar in Moscow on census enumeration experiences, and another in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on census evaluation and data dissemination for the Commonwealth and Baltic States.

J. International Labour Organization

81. In order to address the challenge of high unemployment, underemployment and social exclusion in transition countries, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has undertaken a number of activities. The Tripartite Consultation on the Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, held in Budapest, brought together high-level officials from the ministries of labour, national trade union confederations and national employers' associations of 10 transitional countries (Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine). The results of the meeting became an important input to the International Consultation on the Follow-up to the Summit, held in Geneva in November 1999.

82. The ILO launched a series of country employment policy reviews. An ILO international conference, "Social and Labour Issues: Overcoming Adverse Consequences of the Transition Period in the Russian Federation", was held in Moscow in late 1999. In response to national labour market institutions, the ILO is now finalizing a manual on evaluation of labour market policies in transitional countries.

83. A high-level ILO subregional conference was held in Budapest in 1997 on the issue of employment-related problems faced by women workers in Central and Eastern Europe. As a follow-up, an ILO conference on women and work was organized in Kiev in early 1998. Two national projects on women workers' rights were launched in Hungary and Ukraine. Several national seminars were organized in the region in preparation for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

84. The ILO organizes annual one-week seminars in Cyprus for high-level officials from Governments and employers' and workers' organizations from transitional countries on topics of interest to them. Last year's seminar discussed employment and the movement of workers in the context of the European Union accession process. The seminar was followed by a ministerial conference on the employment and social dimension of the EU accession process. It brought together ministers of labour from all the EU candidate countries.

85. A labour market policy team within the Employment Strategy Department of the ILO is undertaking a comparative research project on labour market flexibility, employment and income security, and labour market policies in developed, transitional and developing countries. The results of the research will help policy makers and their social partners to improve national labour legislation and the social protection system so as to balance desired labour market flexibility and employment security under the specific conditions of transitional economies.

86. Since January 2000, the ILO has concluded agreements of cooperation with the ILO constituents in

all transitional countries invited to negotiations for accession to the EU. A number of technical cooperation activities have already been launched or are under preparation within those agreements.

K. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

87. In 1998 and 1999, UNESCO organized a series of workshops on special needs education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. An international conference, Reforming Secondary Schools: Analysis of Educational Policies in the Countries in Transition, was held in Minsk, Belarus. In connection with the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education, a subregional preparatory conference was held in Moscow, and a follow-up regional seminar took place in Minsk.

88. Vocational training was provided to youth victims of landmines in Sarajevo, and technical support was provided to the establishment of a European Network of Street Children Worldwide. UNESCO is also supporting a regional project on the promotion of the social integration of Roma children and youth in Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Projects have been implemented in Georgia and Ukraine under the theme "Enhancement of learning and training opportunities for marginalized youth".

89. UNESCO/European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES) in Bucharest continues to serve as a focal point for international cooperation and information dissemination. A study entitled "Ten years after and looking ahead: a review of the transformations of higher education in Central and Eastern Europe" was carried out and will be presented at the Conference on the new ventures in European inter-university cooperation, in October 2000 in Cracow, Poland.

90. The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) in Paris and the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE) in Hamburg are assisting in the development of the capacity of transitional economies in the planning, management, evaluation and reform of education systems. National capacities of education systems were reinforced in Albania and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Assistance was provided for rehabilitation of schools in Kosovo. Educational assistance to Croatia, especially to the regions affected by the war, continued through the project "Refugee and displaced persons education in Croatia".

91. UNESCO's programme for Management of Social Transformations (MOST) developed a project entitled "Personal and institutional strategies for management of transformation risks in Central and Eastern Europe", focusing on the comparative analysis of the management of technological, economic, political, cultural and environmental risks.

92. A project has been designed to help a number of Central and Eastern European countries in developing their multilingual communications capacities for a wide range of specialized domains. A network of UNESCO chairs in translation studies is being established, linked with universities in Western Europe and North America. The first two chairs have been set up at Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia, and the Azerbaijan State Institute of Languages in Baku. Universities in Belarus, Poland and Ukraine are to follow. A virtual institute for the purpose of training and research in multilingual communications is being set up.

93. UNESCO is helping the State Hermitage Museum, the Bolshoi Theatre and the State Library in the Russian Federation to introduce new methods of management, public relations, fund-raising and automation. Through UNESCO, the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg has benefited from a substantial contribution from the Netherlands, and financial or "in kind" donations from Sweden and Belgium and from various institutions in France and the United States.

94. UNESCO convened an international conference in Visby, Sweden, with a view to combating stereotypes and prejudice in history textbooks of South-eastern Europe. The conference adopted a set of recommendations in line with the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, adopted by the General Assembly in October 1999.

95. UNESCO carried out two missions to Romania in 1998, in cooperation with the Council of Europe, to review the state of book production and distribution and formulate a new national book and reading policy. Following a diagnosis of the situation and a seminar involving the representatives of the private sector, the outline of the national book policy was identified, and consensus was reached on the need for a book law that would contain fiscal incentives for the production and

distribution of books and would set up a national book council.

96. UNESCO has supported the Biennale of Illustrations Bratislavia in Slovakia. UNESCO and the Biennale have been jointly holding biennial training workshops for illustrators of children's books from developing countries, parallel to the Biennale. In May 2000, UNESCO and the International House of Art for Children organized an exhibition of the best works produced during the workshops at the organization's Paris headquarters.

97. The Natural Sciences Sector of UNESCO is engaged in a number of activities aimed at supporting research and development in countries in transition. For instance, in Albania, UNESCO is assisting in the process of restructuring the system of science and technology as executing agency for UNDP. In Moldova, a consultative mission on the reform of the research and development system was organized in 1999.

L. World Bank

1. Priorities of Bank assistance

98. There was a major reorientation of World Bank activities in transitional economies as new operations were prepared in response to emergency situations, in particular floods in Tajikistan and post-conflict reconstruction in the Balkans. Activities in the Russian Federation and Ukraine were limited, because political developments inhibited major efforts in reforms. In Central Asia and the Caucasus, the Bank focused its operations in the agricultural sector, including research and extension operations in Armenia and land registration and on-farm irrigation operations in the Kyrgyz Republic.

2. Preventing and alleviating poverty

99. An ongoing poverty study documents the heightened incidence of poverty, inequity and declining quality of life in many transitional countries. The Bank is responding by sharpening the poverty focus of its assistance strategy and by an increased emphasis on lending for public goods and basic social services. Interim poverty reduction strategy papers are being prepared for all the countries in the region that are eligible for assistance from the International Development Association (IDA). In Armenia, a social investment fund is financing demand-driven community projects to improve basic social and economic infrastructure, short-term employment opportunities, community outreach and local capacity-building. In the Russian Federation, a coal loan disbursed $200 million in financial year 2000 (after restructuring in mid-1999) to mitigate the impact on laid-off workers and their families and communities of closing inefficient mines, while promoting the development of an efficient, sustainable industry by privatizing the viable core of the sector. The Tajikistan primary health care project will improve primary health services to the poor in rural areas and will develop a more equitable funding approach for health services.

3. Promoting institutional development, governance and anti-corruption

100. Governance and anti-corruption workshops were conducted in a number of countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. During 1999, five countries — Bosnia and Herzegovina, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, and Slovakia — were provided assistance in diagnosing problems of corruption and developing strategies for reform. A new type of governance diagnostic was piloted in Armenia, examining the institutional origins of weak public-sector performance. Reforms aiming to strengthen governance and reduce corruption were supported with a structural adjustment loan in Albania and a programmatic structural adjustment loan in Latvia.

4. Promoting decentralization and community development

101. As a consequence of the transition, subnational authorities have faced a special need to build their institutional capacity. The EU accession countries face a special need in that regard, since regional and local authorities will be the recipients of substantial EU grants. As one example of regional work in this area, the local initiatives project in Bosnia and Herzegovina provides access to credit to low-income micro-entrepreneurs wishing to start-up or expand a small business. More than 35 000 small business loans have been disbursed, nearly half to women and one fifth to returning refugees or displaced persons. Seven out of eight institutions have become operationally self-sufficient and developed the governance, human

resource and financial capacity to be sustainable over the long term.

5. Protecting the environment

102. The Bank helped initiate the preparation of national environmental action plans in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Turkmenistan. In Poland and other EU accession countries, the Bank helped environmental authorities to assess the cost of complying with EU environmental legislation. In Tajikistan, the Bank supports national efforts to build capacity for planning and implementing sustainable mitigation and preparedness activities for Lake Sarez. A new approach to industrial pollution has been taken by the Bulgaria privatization support adjustment loan, which aims to attract private investment by removing environment-related risks to investors. The approach includes provisions to clean up past pollution and to ensure future compliance with environmental standards. The Poland rural environmental protection project demonstrates an effective mechanism for channelling investment for environmental protection in rural areas and will help reduce nitrate run-off from approximately 1,000 farms.

6. Regional development in south-eastern Europe

103. In June 1999 and soon after the Kosovo crisis, the international community and south-eastern European countries signed a stability pact which gave the European Commission (EC) and the World Bank the mandate to coordinate a comprehensive regional development approach and economic assistance to the region. The Bank prepared a report entitled "The road to stability and prosperity in south-eastern Europe: a regional strategy paper". At a funding conference co-chaired by the Bank and the EC in March 2000, donors pledged $2.4 billion equivalent for a series of "quick start" regional activities.

M. International Monetary Fund

104. The International Monetary Fund has continued to provide financial support for economic stabilization and reform programmes in most of the transitional economies over the past few years. A number of advanced transition economies no longer need to seek use of the Fund's resources or are seeking only precautionary arrangements to use resources (as in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). Some — such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Poland — have already repaid all borrowings from the Fund. In such cases, as part of its surveillance role, the Fund's new initiatives to strengthen the architecture of the international financial system have taken on particular importance. The Czech Republic, for example, was one of the first countries to undertake a full "transparency report", a review of the observance of international standards and codes in such areas as monetary, fiscal and prudential affairs. Several countries, including Albania, the Czech Republic and Poland, have been among the leaders in publishing staff reports. Estonia and Hungary have been pilot participants in the Financial Sector Assessment Programme conducted jointly by the Fund and the World Bank, and most transition economies have been preparing to take part in these initiatives.

105. A continuing key element of the Fund's involvement with transitional economies has been its technical assistance and cooperation programmes. This collaboration has included joint financing with the EU, UNDP, the World Bank, central banks and bilateral partners. The Fund has also attached importance to helping with the training of officials responsible for the management and implementation of economic policy, especially through the Joint Vienna Institute.

N. Universal Postal Union

106. One of the major goals of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) is to improve the postal infrastructure and the quality of postal service in developing countries. The focus in transitional countries is on transforming postal administrations into postal businesses capable of providing high quality, competitive products and services, while achieving financial equilibrium. The Postal Development Action Group of UPU works with postal administrations to identify the sources of funding which are most appropriate for their development plans, thus facilitating access to outside funding resources to support postal development and reform. A decision was taken at the UPU Congress in Beijing in 1999 to create a development fund financed by the industrialized countries.

O. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

107. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has identified a number of the challenges transitional countries are facing. They include the erosion of industrial potential, the declining contribution of industry to GDP, ageing technologies, poor product quality, environmental degradation resulting from previous industrial activities, low utilization of installed production capacity disguising a rising trend in hidden unemployment, narrowing markets for locally manufactured goods, difficulties in increasing foreign capital inflows to industrial sectors, and lack of a clear vision or strategy for industrial development in the twenty-first century or for confronting the challenges faced by the manufacturing sector.

108. This analysis provides the basis for policy advice and technical assistance. Requests from the countries in the region for assistance from UNIDO address a number of common priorities: cleaner production and environmental management; investment and technology promotion; quality, standardization, and conformity assessment; and private-sector development.

109. In addition to programmes in individual countries, integrated programmes covering a range of UNIDO services have been developed, covering Armenia, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. UNIDO also cooperates with the countries in transition with respect to the global forum function.

P. International Telecommunication Union

110. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) strategic plan for the period 1999-2003 emphasizes the principle of a competitive telecommunication environment — also the focus of ITU assistance to transitional economies. In 1999, ITU initiated or participated in the following regional activities: a workshop in Armenia on marketing of telecommunication services for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); workshops in Belarus on human resources management and business planning for CIS and on the preparation of business-oriented development plans for CIS; seminars in Georgia on a telecommunications management network and synchronous digital hierarchy for CIS and on legal aspects of reform and WTO telecom agreement for CIS; workshops in Moldova on transformation of companies and quality of management for CIS and on legal aspects of reform for CIS; seminars in the Russian Federation on year 2000 problem for CIS and on tele-medicine for CIS; and a workshop in Ukraine on activity-based costing for CIS. Individual activities undertaken in transitional countries include the installation and implementation in Armenia of PLANITU, a software program for optimizing and dimensioning telecom networks, donation of computers to the Moldovan administration, and a national seminar on PLANITU in the Russian Federation.

111. ITU undertook 12 follow-up missions during 1999. Twenty-two experts were recruited. A total of 190 fellowships were awarded to the CIS subregion for telecommunication-related activities organized by the ITU regional unit.

Q. World Intellectual Property Organization

112. The objectives of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) cooperation programme with countries in transition are to assist in reforming and strengthening intellectual property systems and to encourage their effective use. Within the programme, WIPO continues to assist in strengthening national policy and legal frameworks of intellectual property, taking into account relevant international standards and trends. It also focuses on the modernization of industrial property and copyright administrations, human resource development, and the introduction of modern management systems. Special efforts are being made to support national administrations in expanding their access to technological, legal and other relevant information. WIPO assists the respective countries in increasing the general awareness that effective protection and proper use of intellectual property are essential for access to markets, foreign investment and transfer of technology.

R. World Meteorological Organization

113. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has continued to provide assistance in the planning, management and improvement of the national

meteorological and hydrological services of all member countries. WMO's technical cooperation programme had an important role in enabling WMO to achieve that objective in countries with economies in transition, although the decrease in UNDP funding required WMO to take new initiatives for mobilizing new resources at the national and international levels.

114. Two major projects involving transitional countries are under consideration. One relates to the Caspian Sea area for support and monitoring the environment, and the other involves five Asian Republics (Kazakhstan, Krygyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and relates to supporting the safety of the transport corridor linking Europe to the Caucasus and Asia. In addition, the establishment of a subregional office for Europe, to provide increased support to the countries of Eastern and south-eastern Europe, is under consideration.

S. World Trade Organization

115. Several transitional countries are currently in the process of accession, others have joined WTO as full members recently, and some have been WTO members for a long time. One of the main objectives in designing technical cooperation with transitional countries is to ensure that the offer meets the specific needs that have been identified. WTO activities, to which countries were invited to nominate officials, covered, inter alia, agriculture, rules, market access issues, dispute settlement courses and services. Countries that are at the later stages of the accession process often request the WTO secretariat to provide explanations to a broader audience, including the public and private sector and to members of Parliament, to increase awareness of the WTO system. Countries that have recently joined WTO have often expressed a need to be trained on the operation of the system, particularly in those areas that contain new obligations. The duration of these activities varied between several days and a week.

116. Short (two- or three-week) training courses were held both at Geneva, at the WTO headquarters and at the Joint Vienna Institute (Austria). The courses are mostly conducted by WTO experts. Given the very limited financial and human resources available, the secretariat continues to cooperate with other bodies and international organizations, which often call upon WTO to provide its expertise on specific agreements.